

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



### NEWS RELEASE

*Cora J. Campbell, Commissioner*  
*Jeff R. Regnart, Director*



---

**Contact:**

Jeremy Botz, Gillnet Area Management Biologist  
Tommy Sheridan, Seine Area Management Biologist  
Amanda Wiese, Asst. Area Management Biologist  
Phone: (907) 424-3212 Fax: (907) 424-3235

Prince William Sound Area Office  
401 Railroad Avenue, PO Box 669  
Cordova, AK 99574-0669  
Date Issued: Wednesday, July 24, 2013  
Time: 2:00 pm

### **Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #44**

**COPPER RIVER DISTRICT:** The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Thursday, July 25 for a 36-hour commercial fishing period. Waters within the Chinook salmon inside closure area will be OPEN during this commercial fishing period. The cumulative sonar count through July 23 was 1.24 million fish whereas the anticipated inriver passage range for this date is 676,756–1,039,304 fish. For the week ending July 20, the actual Copper River Delta survey index count was 59,200 versus an anticipated range of 31,424–75,775 sockeye salmon. The hatchery contributions from the period that closed on July 16 were 39% Gulkana Hatchery and 1% Main Bay Hatchery. The preliminary harvest estimate for the fishing period that closed Tuesday, July 23 was 3,720 sockeye salmon and 150 coho salmon with 58 deliveries reported. The cumulative Copper River District commercial harvest to date is 1.58 million sockeye salmon and 2,450 coho salmon.

The Copper River District is open to subsistence fishing concurrent with commercial fishing periods until closed at the end of the season. Subsistence permits may be obtained during regular business hours. The Cordova ADF&G office is open to the public Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm. **Subsistence permits are not available outside of regular office hours.**

**BERING RIVER DISTRICT:** The Bering River District will open at 7:00 am on Thursday, July 25 for a 36-hour commercial fishing period. For the week ending July 20, the actual Bering River District survey index count was 22,150 versus a minimum anticipated range of 11,004–24,208 sockeye salmon. No harvest was reported for the commercial fishing period that closed Tuesday, July 23.

**MONTAGUE DISTRICT:** The Port Chalmers Subdistrict will open to commercial drift gillnet fishing for an 84-hour period anticipated to begin at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 25. Regulatory closed waters and anadromous stream closures within the Port Chalmers Subdistrict will not be in effect. Harvest from the period that closed Sunday, July 21 was 1,300 chum salmon and 4,590 pink salmon with 22 deliveries reported. The cumulative Port Chalmers Subdistrict commercial harvest to date is 465,000 chum salmon and 25,000 pink salmon.

**ESHAMY DISTRICT:** The Main Bay Subdistrict, **excluding the MBH AGZ**, will open to commercial gillnet fishing for a 48-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 25. Harvest from the period that closed Tuesday, July 23 is confidential. Cumulative harvest through this date was 212,000 chum, 49,900 pink and 475,000 sockeye salmon.

**SEINE FISHERIES:** VFDA reports they have secured sufficient broodstock at SGH, and has recommended fishing opportunity in Port Valdez. Time and area for future commercial fishing periods in Port Valdez and Valdez Arm will be based on consideration for VFDA broodstock collection progress and wild stock escapement indices. **There will be an announcement at 2:00 pm on Thursday, July 25, with the potential of announcing an additional Port Valdez clean up fishery on Friday, July 26.**

The pink salmon harvest estimate for the commercial purse seine fishing period on July 22 is approximately 1.5 million fish, including 506,000 fish harvested in the Eastern District, 350,000 in the Northern District, 188,000 in the Coghill District (July 21 and 22), 297,000 in the Southwestern District, and 153,000 in the Southeastern District. Purse seine harvest numbers for the Northwestern and Montague districts are confidential. Aerial surveys of Prince William Sound indicate that pink salmon escapement indices are tracking ahead of anticipated numbers. **It is expected that there will be a regular schedule of broad area commercial purse seine fishing periods taking place on Thursday, July 25, and Sunday, July 28 in much of Prince William Sound.**

PWSAC began its pink salmon cost recovery program this morning at AFK and WNH. Future CPF openings targeting PWSAC enhanced pink salmon in hatchery subdistricts will be based on cost recovery fishing progress and run entry. Test fishing in the Southwestern District began on July 22, gauging pink salmon run entry and stock composition. The set size per sample location has ranged from 600 – 1,300 pink salmon. Stock contribution estimates from Monday, July 22 were 80% hatchery stock origin (SGH= 11%, CCH= 2%, WNH= 21%, and AFK hatchery= 46%) and 20% wild stock origin. ADF&G staff will attempt to sample commercial catch on the fishing grounds during the July 25 commercial fishing period in the Southwestern District, and would appreciate any assistance that fishery participants can provide upon request.

**COGHILL DISTRICT:** The Coghill District, **excluding the Bettles Bay Subdistrict and excluding the Esther Subdistrict and WNH THA and SHA**, will open to commercial DRIFT GILLNET AND PURSE SEINE fishing for a 14-hour period starting at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Thursday, July 25.

**EASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Eastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Thursday, July 25. **Waters of Port Valdez east of 146° 23.00' W Long., and south of 61° 06.50' N Lat. will be closed to commercial fishing during this period.** All waters of the Valdez small boat harbor and within 50 yards of the entrance to the harbor are closed to commercial fishing. Waters within 200 yards of the AMHS Valdez Ferry Terminal are also closed to commercial fishing when the ferry is arriving and departing. Waters within the Alyeska Marine Terminal (Trans Alaska Pipeline System) Security Zone are closed to commercial fishing. Anadromous stream closures and regulatory closed waters north of a line from Potato Point to Entrance Point will not be in effect. Anadromous stream closures and regulatory closed waters south of a line from Potato Point to Entrance Point will be in effect.

**Waters inside of the following Eastern District Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) markers are closed to commercial fishing during this period:**

- (1) Galena Bay: east of a line from 60°56.87' N. lat., 146°39.87' W. long. to 60°56.55' N. lat., 146°39.65' W. long.;
- (2) Jack Bay: south and east of a line from 61°02.34' N. lat., 146°35.27' W. long. to 61°02.17' N. lat., 146°39.77' W. long.;
- (3) Sawmill Bay: north of a line from 61°02.71' N. lat., 146°46.44' W. long. to 61°02.58' N. lat., 146°47.07' W. long.

**MONTAGUE DISTRICT:** Waters of the Montague District, **excluding the Port Chalmers Subdistrict**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Thursday, July 25.

**NORTHERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Northern District, **excluding the CCH HEEZ**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Thursday, July 25. The CCH HEEZ consists of the waters of the CCH SHA north and east of a line from 61° 00.97' N., 147° 32.62' W. southward to a point on the shore at 61° 00.44' N., 147° 31.50' W.

Waters inside of the following Northern District Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) markers are also closed to commercial fishing during this period:

- (1) Siwash Bay: west of a line from 60°58.26' N. lat., 147°37.32' W. long. to 60°56.96' N. lat., 147°36.02' W. long.;
- (2) Jonah Bay: west of a line from 61°01.17' N. lat., 147°35.07' W. long. to 61°00.40' N. lat., 147°35.93' W. long.;

**NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Northwestern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Thursday, July 25.

**SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Thursday, July 25.

**SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** In the Southwestern District, the Point Elrington Subdistrict and Port San Juan Subdistrict, **excluding the AFK Hatchery THA and SHA**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Thursday, July 25. Waters east of Point Helen (on Knight Island) will also open to commercial purse seine fishing for this period.

**The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to occur by 2:00 pm Thursday, July 25.**

Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason either establishing an additional period or extending an open period.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing. However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap\\_reporting\\_form.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf) for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf) for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” 16U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an “intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.